

# Volvo V70 estate car

**Featured model: 2.4S (170bhp)**



**F**IRST OF ALL, LET'S NAIL SOME myths about Volvo's estate cars.

The earlier rear-wheel drive versions (140/240) were very coarse and heavy-going; the 740/940 were better, but the advent of the 850 heralded the real improvement. However, they were never as commodious as equivalent Peugeots, for instance.

The current version shares much of its underpinnings with the (smaller) S60 and (larger S80) saloons, but debuts with its own, mostly unturboed, five-cylinder engines. This 170bhp version sits right in the middle of the range and proves to be very smooth, very quiet – but completely different in its handling from the saloons. It's soft-riding, slightly under-damped at times, but will corner well once the slack has been taken up. Generally, however, its "don't let's rush" approach fits in well with the impedimenta one may be carrying in the back.

In the back, this role of holdall isn't allowed to compromise creature comfort (even if there's a little less leg-stretching space than before); a well-proportioned 60/40, twin-angled, split back seat folds, without encumbering seatbelt runs, to produce a beautifully carpeted load deck. Even the centre armrest (and front console) have a trick or two up their sleeve. There's no load sill but, as before, the load height doesn't match an MPV's.

The V70's responses may not be as razor-sharp as its stablemates', but the cabin and driving position are just as comfortable and workmanlike; lots of seat

adjustment makes this a good car for the tall driver.

There's still evidence that Volvo is determined to cajole you into best behaviour – daylight headlamps, seatbelt warning chimes, a speedo that deliberately reads high – that sort of thing.

Its conscientious approach to safety is much more commendable; both accident and injury avoidance are catered for handsomely.

Of course, This V70 isn't the cheapest to buy or to run, but there's an interesting new five-pot diesel of in-house manufacture just around the corner. Factory conversions to LPG or CNG are also available for high-mileage users; previous experience indicates that the CNG one drives really well, if only you can readily obtain the stuff!

## VERDICT

**"Replacing the Swedish 'crown jewels' was never going to be a walkover", Volvo's (British) design-chief admits – but his team have made a good stab at it. It's roominess has been overshadowed by the new MPV alternatives, but it still combines driving pleasure, grandeur and down-to-earth practicality in even measure. And when it comes to the crunch, you won't find a better protector – so long as you've secured the kitchen sink with the lashings eyes provided.**

## AT A GLANCE

*considering size, price and rivals*

<b>Overtaking ability</b>	★★★★○
<b>Space/practicality</b>	★★★★○
<b>Controls/displays</b>	★★★★○
<b>Safety</b>	★★★★☆
<b>Handling/steering</b>	★★★○○
<b>Comfort</b>	★★★★○
<b>Fuel economy</b>	★★★○○

## SPECIFICATION

**engine** 2435cc, 5-cylinder, petrol; 170bhp at 5900rpm, 170 lb ft at 4500rpm; belt-driven twin overhead camshafts, 20 valves

**transmission** 5-speed manual, front-wheel drive; 24.2 mph/1000rpm in 5th, 19.5 in 4th

**suspension** front: independent damper/struts, integral coil springs, anti-roll bar. Rear: independent multi-link, coil springs, anti-roll bar

**steering** hydraulic power assistance; 3.0 turns lock-to-lock; 11.7m diameter turning circle between kerbs

**brakes** ventilated discs front solid discs rear, with standard electronic anti-lock and brake force distribution

**wheels/tyres** 6in alloy with 195/65R15V tyres (Michelin on test car); "space-saver" temporary spare

## LIKES AND GRIPES

clever table/childseat/storage provision in rear centre  
heat and fresh air outlets at rear  
rear grocery bag holder  
forward-folding front passenger seat

load height still limited under load cover no sliding load tray, BMW-style a/c switches on when set to screen speedo very optimistic : 76mph at 70

## THE V70 RANGE

**body** estate car; S60 and S80 are saloon counterparts

**trim levels** S, SE

**engines** petrol: 5 cylinder/2.4 litre/140 and 170bhp, 5/2.4 turbo/208, 5/2.3/250 diesel: 5/2.5/140

**drive** front-wheel drive, 5-speed manual; (5-speed automatic with torque convertor optional extra)

**OVERTAKING ABILITY** ★★☆☆○

*These acceleration times are just what one would expect, but the smoothness and flexibility are excellent for a five cylinder*

acceleration in seconds	through gears*	④ <sup>th</sup> gear	⑤ <sup>th</sup> gear		
20-40mph	3.1	9.0	12.3		
30-50mph	3.8	8.5	11.9		
40-60mph	4.0	8.7	11.9		
50-70mph	5.1	9.0	12.4		
<b>30-70mph</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>24.3</b>		
max speed in each gear (*using 6400rpm for best acceleration)					
gear	①*	②*	③*	④*	⑤
speed (mph)	35	61	91	125	130

**SAFETY** ★★☆☆○

*One of the best we've seen for emergency stops, as well as injury prevention; could be better for pedestrians, though. Brakes a bit sharp at first*

braking		dry road stopping distance	
pedal feel	★★☆☆○	from 50mph (with standard ABS)	
in emergency	★★★★★	pedal load	distance
handbrake	★★☆☆○	10kg	27
		23kg	22½ best stop
		+4kg ie 27kg	23½m ABS on

**EURO NCAP CRASH TEST RATINGS (S80 - similar structure)**

front impact	69%	side impact	100%
overall	85%	pedestrian rating	★★☆☆○

**SPACE AND PRACTICALITY** ★★☆☆○

*No significant gains inside – actually less rear legroom; load deck quite high, but good width for bulky cargo. Door oddments compartments limited, but some nice details elsewhere*

in centimetres (5-door estate)		inside († with no sunroof)	
<b>outside</b>		front - legroom	85-116
length	471	- headroom	94-101†
width - inc mirrors	208	rear - typical leg/	101/
- mirrors folded	186	kneeroom	77
height (no roof bars)	147	- headroom	93
load sill height		- hiproom	141-143
(inside/outside)	0/58	<b>load space (all seats in use)</b>	
<b>steering</b>		(litres/cu ft)	505/17.9
turns lock-to-lock	3.0	load length	101-168
turning circle (metres)	11.7	full length to fascia	277
easy to park/garage?		load width	113-140
	★★☆☆○	load height (to shelf/	39/
		to top of aperture	81

**SECURITY FEATURES**

central locking	✓	alarm	✓
remote control	✓	immobiliser	✓
auto window closure	✗	luggage security	★★☆☆○
deadlocks	✓		
✓ standard	0	factory option	✗ not available

**HANDLING AND STEERING** ★★☆☆○

*Not as good as S60 saloon version or a BMW 5-Series, but totally stable and easy going*



**COMFORT** ★★☆☆○

*Absorbent, but under-damped, floating over crests and undulations can provoke queasiness – a load doesn't seem to alter things. Good side-to-side heating and very quiet at all speeds.*

**CONTROLS AND DISPLAYS** ★★☆☆○

*Light clutch, slightly cramped accelerator. Lots of front seat adjustments but some awkward. Timed headlamps to see you indoors; front head restraints impede vision, forwards and rearwards*



**FUEL ECONOMY** ★★☆☆○

*Excellent range despite "alarmist" gauge/warning lamp. A respectable mpg – expect 10 per cent worse with automatic*

AA test results (mpg)		official figures (mpg)	
worst (hard/urban)	21	urban	23.5
best (gentle/rural)	35	extra urban	40.4
<b>overall mpg on test</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>combined</b>	<b>32.1</b>
realistic tank capacity	62 litres	CO <sub>2</sub> emissions	210g/km
typical range	425 miles	car tax band	D

**HOW THE VOLVO V70 COMPARES**

	engine cap/power (cyl/cc/bhp)	revs at 70mph (rpm)	30-70mph through gears (sec)	30-70mph in 5th/4th gears (sec)	fuel economy (mpg)	brakes - best stop from ⑤ 50mph (m/kg)	maximum legroom - front (cm)	typical leg/ kneeeroom - rear (cm)	steering turns/ (p) circle (m)	overall length (cm)
<b>VOLVO V70 2.4/170</b>	5/2435/170	2900	8.9	24.3/17.5	31	22½/23	116	101/77	3.0/11.7	471
<b>BMW 523i Touring</b>	6/2494/170	2970	8.1	24.1/16.9	30	23½/18	116	103/76	3.0/11.0	480
<b>Audi A6 2.4 Avant</b>	V6/2393/165	3100	8.8	21.6/15.2	30½	23/19	109	100/74	2.8/11.1	480
<b>VW Passat 2.5 V6 Tdi (Auto)(d)</b>	V6/2496/150	2240	9.4	auto	36	25/14	110	103/75	2.8/10.9	467
<b>Toyota Camry (Auto)</b>	V6/2995/188	2600	8.8	auto	25	26/18	107	109/79	3.1/11.6	476
<b>Volvo V70 2.4/140 †</b>	5/2435/140	2650	10.2	28.7/20.0	29½	25½/22	109	106/78	3.3/10.5	472

\* all estate cars † previous model (d) diesel © all with ABS